

## Media Inquiries:

Don Bolger  
Public Information Officer  
☎ (630) 221-7374

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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

October 12, 2018

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Health Department and Sheriff's Office Receive Federal Grant

*Funds to Support Countywide Behavioral Health Partnership*

**DUPAGE COUNTY**—The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) and DuPage County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) has received a U.S. Department of Justice two-year grant of \$471,000 to support the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP).

The JMHCP will serve 700 individuals through the work of the DuPage County Behavioral Health Collaborative (BHC), which is co-chaired by DCHD and DCSO. The BHC will divert individuals with mental illness or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse from the criminal justice system, and provide re-entry supports for incarcerated individuals to reduce re-offending.

“This funding will allow the Behavioral Health Collaborative to move forward with countywide partnerships that will offer residents a sustainable community resource tools to bridge issues between mental health, substance use and criminal justice systems,” said Karen Ayala, Health Department Executive Director.

DuPage County Jail statistics from 2017 show 1,048 inmates self-reported having mental health issues, and more than 14,500 mental health visits by a psychiatrist, psychologist or mental health specialist. At times, 20 percent of the jail population was on medication to treat psychiatric conditions, and the average stay for inmates with mental health issues (90 days) was more than triple the stay (28 days) for those in general population.

Sheriff John Zaruba stated, “This is another great example of the benefits of the continued partnership between the Sheriff's Office and the Health Department. The Sheriff's Office is dedicated to serving all citizens of DuPage County and we need to continue to be creative in how we assist those suffering from mental health and substance use issues.”

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Sheriff Zaruba added, “The implementation of diversionary programs and services for these segments of the population are essential in fostering continued treatment for those in need, and I’m dedicated to the advancement of these types of partnerships and programs.”

The BHC will continue its work on two of DuPage County’s highest priorities, a 24/7 central receiving center for mental illness and substance use, and post-incarceration supports

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